

Message Text

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SS-15 USIA-15 HA-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /107 W
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P 201253Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5569
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINR, EAID, CG, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON EXECU-
TIONS IN ZAIRE

REF: BRUSSELS 5441

1. FOLLOWING IS INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN
MINISTER SIMONET'S MARCH 17 STATEMENT ON EXECUTIONS
IN ZAIRE (REFTEL):

"THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED THE ANNOUNCE-
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MENT OF THE CARRYING OUT OF THE VERDICT OF THE
TRIBUNAL OF KINSHASA WITH SURPRISE AND CONSTER-
NATION.

THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ACCUSTOMED US TO ITS
ACTING WITH MORE CLEMENCY IN COMPARABLE CASES
IN WHICH DEATH SENTENCES WERE NOT CARRIED OUT.

ITS DECISION TO CARRY OUT THE VERDICT IS THE ACTION OF A GOVERNMENT DETERMINED TO REACT WITH AN EXTREME SOLUTION TO A POLITICAL CRISIS THE SERIOUSNESS OF WHICH IS PATENTLY OBVIOUS TO ALL OBSERVERS. THIS SHOWS THAT ZAIRE, SIMILAR IN MANY RESPECTS SOME OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, IS GOING THROUGH A PERIOD OF DISORDER AND EXCESSES WHICH CANNOT BE IGNORED BY EUROPE AND THE WEST.

A POSITION THAT WOULD CONSIST OF AVOIDING AN ANALYSIS OF THAT DECISION UNDER THE PRETEXT THAT ONE SHOULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A FRIENDLY COUNTRY IS NOT JUSTIFIED. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE THIS HAS TO DO WITH A COUNTRY SO CLOSE TO OURS AND WHICH HAS SHOWN US SO MANY TANGIBLE PROOFS OF ITS DESIRE FOR FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION THAT WE MUST SPEAK OUT CLEARLY.

CLEARLY, OF COURSE, BUT WITHOUT PASSION OR PREJUDICE. ALL HASTY AND SWEEPING CONDEMNATIONS OF WHAT IS NOW HAPPENING IN ZAIRE WOULD CONSTITUTE IN OUR EYES A POSITION AS IRRESPONSIBLE AS ABSTAINING FROM ALL COMMENT.

OUR FIRST DUTY, THEREFORE, MUST BE TO CONTROL OUR ANGUISH IN THE FACE OF GRAVE SITUATION AND TO SHED
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ALL POSSIBLE LIGHT ON THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE. WE HAVE THE DUTY, BUT ALSO THE RIGHT, TO ASK THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT FOR SOME EXPLANATIONS. IN EFFECT, BELGIUM IS TODAY ENGAGED WITH A CERTAIN NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE PREPARATION OF A DEVELOPMENT PLAN, THE OBJECT OF WHICH, AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, IS TO AVOID THAT THERE DEVELOP IN ZAIRE A SITUATION OF VIOLENCE AND REPRESSION RESULTING PRINCIPALLY FROM THE DETORATION OF THE ECONOMY AND FROM ADMINISTRATIVE DISORGANIZATION. MOREOVER, WE ALSO SHOULD SEEK THE TRUTH BECAUSE IT SEEMS THAT THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS ACCUSED BY THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT. BUT, THERE DID NOT TAKE PLACE ON THE PART OF THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT OR, SPECIFICALLY, OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ANY INTERFERENCE OF ANY KIND. THE ONLY INTERVENTIONS IN ZAIRIAN AFFAIRS THAT WE HAVE PERMITTED OURSELVES HAVE ASSUMED THE FORM OF ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS, ASKED OF US MOREOVER BY THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR THE REVIVAL OF THE

ZAIRIAN ECONOMY.

WE RESPECT AND UNDERSTAND THE JEALOUS CARE
WITH WHICH THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT PROTECTS
ITSELF AGAINST OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. THE
ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT WITHOUT DOUBT WILL UNDERSTAND
THAT WE CANNOT ADMIT THAT THERE EXISTS THE
SLIGHTEST DOUBT AS TO THE OBSERVANCE BY THE

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BELGIAN GOVERNMENT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF
NON-INTERFERENCE. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT
THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT WILL BE ASKED FOR EXPLANATIONS
THROUGH THE CHANNEL OF OUR AMBASSADOR.

WITHOUT WISHING TO SPECULATE ON THE CONTEXTS OR NATURE
OF THESE EXPLANATIONS, I WANT TO INDICATE,
HOWEVER THAT IT DOES NOT SEEM TO ME THAT THIS
PUTS INTO JEOPARDY THE POLICY WE HAVE ELABORATED

DURING MANY MONTHS WITH THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT AND
WHICH WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH THE GOVERNMENTS
OF THE COUNTRIES CALLED UPON TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES
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IN THE DRAWING UP AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
OBJECTIVES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN. I WOULD
STRESS THAT THIS LAST POINT SEEMS TO ME MORE
INDISPENSABLE THAN EVER. INDEED, CONTRARY TO THE
INTERPRETATION THAT IS SOMETIMES GIVEN TO THE
BELGIAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TOWARDS ZAIRE, ITS PURPOSE
IS NOT PRIMARILY TO ORGANIZE THE SUPPORT OF A
REGIME BUT RATHER TO REESTABLISH FOR THE
BENEFIT OF THE POPULATION OF A COUNTRY THE BASIC
CONDITIONS THAT WOULD PERMIT THAT POPULATION
TO LIVE AND TO HOPE FOR A BETTER LIFE.

WE DO NOT PLAN TO REPLACE EITHER THE ZAIRIAN
PEOPLE OR THE GOVERNMENT OF THAT COUNTRY
IN JUDGING THE ROUTES TO FOLLOW IN ORDER TO
ASSURE ECONOMIC STABILITY AND POLITICAL
ORDER. WE HAVE SAID VERY CLEARLY THAT WE
ARE PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER
COUNTRIES, TO PARTICIPATE THERE, AND WE DO
NOT PLAN TO ABANDON THAT UNILATERALLY.
BUT FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT RECIPROCAL FRANKNESS IS
BUT A SHAM OF FRIENDSHIP, BE IT BETWEEN PEOPLES
OR BETWEEN MEN. THAT IS WHY WE MUST EXPRESS TO
ZAIRE OUR CONCERN AND OUR PERPLEXITY ABOUT WHAT
COULD BE CALLED THE REGRETTABLE EVENTS OF THESE
LAST WEEKS. CHAMBERS

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